Tamil TIMES

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★ NORTH-EAST PC ELECTIONS, A CHAOS

★ POLLS & THE GATHERING STORM

PRESIDENTIAL CONTENDERS

R. Premadasa

Mrs. S. Bandaranaike

★ KITTU FREED

Sathasivam
Krishnakumar (Kittu)

★ *Weli Oya Outrage*

★ **REMEMBERING FOR THE FUTURE**

★ Juggling with Japanese Aid

★ *On Kanthasamy's Abduction*

CONTENTS

Colombo Newsletter.....3

Polls & The Gathering Storm.....4

Kittu & other LTTE men freed.....6

The Vali-Oya Outrage.....7

Remembering the Future.....10

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CONTENTS

Readers Forum.....12

Juggling with Japanese Aid.....16

Chekov & Brecht in Tamil.....19

The End of An Era.....20

Classified advertisements.....22

MRS BANDARANAIKE SHOULD COME CLEAN

Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike has been adopted by an alliance of opposition parties in Sri Lanka as their common candidate in the forthcoming Presidential election. She may become the next all powerful executive President of Sri Lanka. At a public meeting on 7 October, she said:

'Almost 95 per cent of the people of Sri Lanka were opposed to the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord. That included the LTTE. As Sri Lankans, we must get together and discuss our problems. We have to deal with the grievances of the minorities. I firmly believe that a new government under my leadership can bring the communities together on the basis of equality and by dispelling the mistrust that was there with the present government'.

With her past track record and that of her Sri Lankan Freedom Party, can one place any trust on Mrs. B to 'deal with the grievances of the minorities' and 'bring the communities together on the basis of equality'?

As leader of the SLFP and Prime Minister in 1956, her late husband S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike set alight the flames of Sinhala chauvinism and anti-Tamil communalism with his demagogic 'Sinhala Only in 24 hours'. He presided over the first ever island-wide anti-Tamil pogrom in 1958 which set the pernicious precedent for many more such pogroms in the future.

The popular wave of sympathy that followed her husband's untimely tragic demise in 1959, catapulted Mrs. Bandaranaike into power and prominence. As Prime Minister, she further fanned the flames of ethnic tension and conflict. What her late husband enacted into law, she implemented in practice with a vengeance against the Tamil people. Tamil government employees who failed to qualify in Sinhala were compulsorily retired or discriminated against. Sinhala was imposed as the operational language in the law courts. When the Tamil politicians began a Gandhyan style non-violent campaign against governmental discriminatory and oppressive measures, she sent her military into the Tamil areas in the early 1960s and from then on her army remained as an occupying force in these areas. She and her party aided and abetted by the extremist sections of the Buddhist clergy thwarted any attempt at a negotiated solution to the ethnic problem.

Her regime of 1970 to 1977 presided over some of the most direct assaults on the minorities, especially the Tamil people. Her Constitution of 1972 removed all vestiges of constitutional guarantees for the minorities. Sinhala was enshrined in the Constitution as the only official language and Buddhism elevated almost to the position of the State Religion. A moratorium on the recruitment of those belonging to the Tamil community into the armed and police services was introduced so much so that by the time she was defeated in 1977, nearly 97 per cent of the armed services comprised of those belonging to the majority Sinhala community. Recruitment to the Civil and Administrative services in the government sector was subjected to an institutionalised policy of flagrant discrimination against the Tamil community. Admissions to universities, medical colleges and institutions of higher education were based on a viciously anti-Tamil policy of discrimination so much so that Tamil students who obtained higher marks were shut out while those Sinhala students who obtained lower marks were made eligible for admission. It was during her time, for the first time, members of the Tamil community particularly the youth began to be detained without trial for prolonged periods. It was the policies and measures pursued so vigorously by her and the SLFP during this period that drove even the moderate Federal Party to raise the demand of a separate state. History is certain to assail her regime of 1970 to 1977 as the one which gave birth, substance and justification for Tamil militancy.

Even after the tragedy of the July 1983 island-wide anti-Tamil pogrom in which an estimated 2,000 Tamils perished, Mrs. Bandaranaike and her party have persistently thwarted any attempt to settle the ethnic problem by negotiation.

Today, they oppose the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement. They oppose the establishment of Provincial Councils. They oppose the merger of the northern and eastern provinces.

With such a damning track record, does Mrs. Bandaranaike expect anyone to believe her when she claims that she and her party would bring the communities together on the basis of equality under her leadership? So far neither she nor her party has spelt out their policy to resolve the ethnic problem. Now that she has been adopted by the All Ceylon Tamil Congress along with some opposition political parties as their common Presidential candidate, Mrs. Bandaranaike and her party should come clean and openly spell out their agenda for the resolution of the ethnic conflict and restoration of peace and harmony.

COLOMBO NEWSLETTER

by Chithra

NORTH-EAST PC ELECTIONS IN CHAOS

A chaotic situation prevails in respect of the elections to the merged Northern and Eastern Provincial Council scheduled to be held on November 19. When nominations closed on 10 October, besides a few nominations from candidates belonging to the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) and the ruling United National Party (UNP) for seats in the Eastern province, the majority of nominations were filed by candidates belonging to three Tamil militant groups, the Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), Eelam National Democratic Liberation Front (ENDLF) and Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO)

Three main well known Tamil militant groups, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), Peoples Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) and Eelam Revolutionary Organisers (EROS) had already indicated that they would not participate in the Provincial Council elections. The LTTE openly called for a boycott of the elections and issued warnings against those who participated in whatever form and organised a 'hartal' on the closing day for nominations. The warnings extended to government employees who, by virtue of their official position, were bound to receive nominations and make arrangements for the elections. Most of the Government Agent's offices in the north and east remained closed on nomination day in keeping with the warning from the LTTE.

The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) also declined to participate in the elections while appealing to the Tamil people of the north and east 'to extend their full support to the efforts to activate the democratic process'. The TULF statement stated that the democratic process in the Northern and Eastern Provinces was the necessary means to consolidate the gains obtained through the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. Although the Government of India unilaterally declared a cease-fire for ten days to enable the LTTE to come into the political mainstream, the TULF expressed its disappointment at the LTTE to respond positively to the gesture of the Indian Government. This failure has created a situation in which it was difficult for an unarmed non-violent political party like the TULF to field candidates at the PC elections. However, the TULF was conscious that the Tamil speaking people were fully supportive of the efforts of the Indian government to institutionalise the achievements of the Agreement and ensure the fulfilment of the commitment for the improvements to the scheme of devolution through an elected North-East Provincial Council.

The non-participation by the other militant groups and the TULF has resulted in the ENDLF, EPRLF and some TELO candidates being uncontested in many of the electoral districts in the north and east. The ENDLF had a total of twelve of its candidates uncontested in Mullaitivu (5), Vavuniya (4) and Kilinochchi (3). The EPRLF had 24 of its candidates uncontested comprising 19 for Jaffna district and 5 in the Mannar district. In the Trincomalee district too, candidates belonging to these two groups were uncontested as the nominations from UNP candidates were rejected. Contests were expected in the Batticaloa and Amparai districts where some candidates from the UNP and SLMC had submitted nominations. Predictably violence has broken out between groups participating in the elections and those not doing so. There have been many instances of killings too. Following these developments, some have publicly withdrawn their nominations. TELO has totally pulled out of the elections.

There is speculation that the whole attempt at the electoral process in the north and east would be called off in view of the chaotic state of affairs.

Cease-Fire

Prior to the announcement calling for nominations, the Indian government ordered a unilateral cease-fire for five days in the first instance beginning 15 September and called upon the LTTE to surrender its weapons. The LTTE responded with a statement welcoming the cease-fire but asked for it to be a permanent one and urged the Indian government to invite the LTTE for negotiations. An extension of the cease-fire for a further five days was ordered by India, but the LTTE did not accede to the demand for the surrender of weapons. Before the cease-fire expired on 25 September, leading Tamil citizens from the north met the Indian High Commissioner, Mr. Dixit, on 24 September and urged him to extend the cease-fire for longer period which was declined.

Govt. Announcement

On 9 September, President Jayewardene issued a proclamation announcing the merger of the northern and eastern provinces, and nominated Mr. Shelton Ranarajah, the present Deputy Minister of Justice, as Governor for the merged North-East Province.

A communique issued by the Presidential Secretariat on 19 September stated that necessary legislation would be enacted before the actual date of the elelctions for the North-East Provincial council to make 'Sinhala and Tamil as operational official languages'. The communique added that all Tamils held in detention would be released. Since then a substantial number of detainees have already been released.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

The battlelines for the forthcoming Presidential elections are already being drawn. The elections are expected to be held sometime during the third week of December and nominations will close by the end of November.

President Jayewardene, after much deliberation, has abandoned the idea of running for a third term. The Working Committee of the ruling United National Party which met on 16 September decided to nominate Prime Minister R. Premadas as its Presidential candidate. He was proposed by Jayewardene and seconded by the Minister of National Security, Lalith Athulathmudali and the Minister for Lands and Mahaveli Development, Gamini Dissanayake.

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) had already decided to nominate Mrs. S. Bandaranaike as its candidate. However, now an eight-party coalition has adopted her as their common Presidential candidate. The eight political parties in this alliance are the SLFP, Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP), Eksath Lanka Jathika Pakshaya (ELJP), All Ceylon Tamil Congress (ACTC), Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), Democratic Workers Congress (DWC) and the Liberal Party.

Most of the parties in the opposition alliance are against the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement and the presence of the IPKF, and one of its constituents the JVP is engaged in an armed confrontation with the government. Except the All Ceylon Tamil Congress led by Kumar Ponnampalam, DWC, SLMC and Liberal Party, all other parties of this alliance are opposed to any meaningful devolution of powers to Tamil areas. In this context, how the Tamil Congress can find common cause in such an alliance is somewhat intriguing.

Already, Mrs.Bandaranaike has thrown a challenge to the UNP's nominee Premadasa, as to what his attitude to the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement would be. It is a known fact that Mr. Premadasa was opposed to the agreement when it was signed and he boycotted the ceremonies when Rajiv

Continued on page 6

POLLS AND THE GATHERING STORM

by
S. Sivanayagam
(Former Editor Saturday Review)

As I write this – the clock on the wall gives one the nervous feeling that it is ticking with great urgency. By the time this reaches the reader, it is quite likely that events would have overtaken what appears in cold print.

Indian policy on Sri Lanka, which looked flawed by indecisiveness these past few months, now seems to be going on a set course. Phase 3 of 'Operation Checkmate' covering the jungle belt in the Vavuniya-Mullaitivu sector is taking on a more determined direction, and as to what the eventual consequence of it would be, is a matter of speculation. But whatever the outcome, it cannot be something that could bring permanent peace to the Tamil people. With several elections in the offing within the next 4/5 months, all of them threatening to be controversial and acrimonious, and the political climate in the entire South Asian subcontinent – Pakistan, Burma, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan (India including), enveloped in dark clouds, there is the aura of a gathering storm that could engulf the entire region.

As the scenario presents itself at this point of time, the first of the elections could be in November – for a Provincial Council for a merged Northern and Eastern provinces in Sri Lanka. Quick on the heels of that, possibly in December, there might take place the Sri Lankan Presidential election. Elections to Tamil Nadu Assembly are likely in early January in the coming year. The Sri Lanka General Parliamentary elections are also due sometime in the first half of 1989. There is more than a tenuous link between each of them, and the fate of one could disturb the schedule of the other. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi himself ends his 5-year term late next year, and the prospects of elections being advanced cannot be ruled out, with the Indian Opposition coming for the first time in four years within striking distance of capturing power.

Time is running short

In the region itself, the political ferment in Burma and Pakistan and the growing agitation for the restoration of democracy in both countries and their logical sequel will certainly have a bearing on Indian policy approaches in the region, and could even have an indirect bearing on Indian perceptions on the Sri Lankan and Tamil questions. While the complexities around are building up, time is running short for Prime Minister Gandhi, left as he is with a bare four months to prove that his accord with President Jayewardene has worked, before his Congress-I party faces the Tamil Nadu voter. That could imply only one thing – that the Tamils are destined to go through another critical phase in their life. Had

we assumed that the Tamils living in North-East Sri Lanka have gone through the worst, and nothing is now likely to happen that could be any worse than what they had gone through in October-November 1987, even that is an assumption that we cannot safely rest on. **There is a relentlessness about the march of events over which neither the Indian Government, nor the Sri Lankan, nor the Liberation Tigers appear to have any firm control,caught up as they all are by the mistakes, miscalculations, unwise assessments and impetuous actions of the past one year.Decision makers on all sides seem to be falling back on knee-jerk reactions as substitutes for policy.**

It is obvious in each one of these elections, all of which have been pushed back beyond their original time frames, there is danger lurking that is expected because the longer you hold back the democratic process, the less peaceful it will turn out to be. It happened in Sri Lanka in 1977 when Mrs Bandaranaike went to the polls after seven years and it is bound to be worse if President Jayewardene decides to have general elections in 1989 after 12 years. In fact the violence may be in proportion to the period of postponement; what we witness today in Burma and Pakistan are visible examples. Between denial of popular participation in the affairs of a country and the emergence of violence there is a distinct connection.

Popular susceptibility

Whatever the shortcomings there are in Democracy, that is the only system that recognises, or at least has the compulsion to recognise the rights of the people. But as the late uncommon American statesman Adlai Stevenson said **'Government by the consent of the governed is the most difficult system of all because it depends for its success and viability on the good judgements and wise decisions of so many of us.'** But unfortunately in the experience of the post-colonial, newly emergent Asian democracies, particularly in Sri Lanka, so many of us do not judge or decide when it comes to election issues. We merely emote. That goes for both the Tamil and Sinhala voters. I remember as a schoolboy, joining a procession in Jaffna that kept on raising the slogan in Tamil – 'Our "palam" (strength) is Ponnampalam.' That was the time when the Cambridge-returned G.G. Ponnambalam was riding a wave. In the south the trend began with another orator S.W.R.D.Bandaranaike, Oxford-returned, who came to power in 1956 by thundering for the ushering in of the 'age of the common man'.

May be, a major weakness in democracy is popular susceptibility to platform eloquence, in which rational thought gets submerged. Dictatorships do not necessarily arise from coups and army interventions. It could so happen that because of the lack of vigilance or the loss of courage on the part of the people, the media and the judiciary, democracy may yield to authoritarianism. It happened in Germany in the thirties when Parliament turned over its constitutional authority to Hitler; out of which emerged the Third Reich which Hitler boasted would last for a thousand years. Mercifully it lasted only 12 years, but remember the damage it did for the German psyche? In Sri Lanka it has happened – a duly elected Parliament surrendering its authority to one man and committing suicide, although its body lingers on at Jayawardhanapura in a semi-embalmed state. But the point one has to make is, given all these pitfalls, it would be foolish to adduce these as arguments against Democracy itself or for the postponing of any democratic process such as electoral polls; or even for the avoidance of them.It would be like arguing against sex because it can lead to adultery or crime.

The Trojan horse

These thoughts become pertinent in view of the proposed election to the north-east provincial council. Here is a terrible dilema facing the Tamil people, but are we fully conscious of it? It is easy to talk or write about events *after* they have happened. Shouldn't we anticipate the consequences of a developing situation, and try to prevent or minimise them if the consequences prove disastrous? On the one hand, the facts are these:– President Jayewardene tells the UNP working committee on August 29 that a proclamation would be made shortly, link-

ing the northern and eastern provinces under the Provincial Councils Act, after which the election would take place. He also said Indian troops would help the Sri Lankan security forces and the police to provide security for the holding of the elections. On the same day in the Indian Parliament in Delhi, Minister for External Affairs Mr.P.V.Narasimha Rao rejects the plea for a cease fire; which means the offensive against the LTTE will go on.

Both governments are reportedly determined to go ahead with what on paper is a democratic course; but in the Tamil perception, the very democracy that they need more badly than anyone else, is arriving in the form of a Trojan horse! Memory is still fresh with what happened in Jaffna in the run up to previous local polls, the District Development Council elections of 1981: TULF participation, LTTE boycott, shots at an election meeting, killings, burnings of the Jaffna Public Library, TULF office, Eelanadu office the house of the Jaffna MP etc. disappearances of ballot boxes, and of course a voter turn-out of 10% or under.

Colombo's argument to Delhi is, that if President Jayewardene could hold provincial council elections in the south despite JVP threats and a heavy toll of human life, why cannot the Indian government help him to hold similar elections in the north-east, particularly when it is argued that normalcy has returned? That is an argument that is difficult to counter. There is also a hidden implication – if President Jayewardene is prepared to sacrifice Sinhala lives, why should the Indian government hesitate to sacrifice some more Tamil lives.?

Power struggle

If the argument goes that should the LTTE call for a boycott, the public would have little choice but to back the LTTE and abstain from going to the polling booths, the counter argument from both governments is that they would be satisfied with a low turn-out. It is not even relevant they say, the important thing was to go through with the elections, and establish civil authority. Even on the possibility of a total boycott, the Tamils are not in a position to ensure that, given on the one hand, the will and might of two governments, and on the other hand the absence of a Tamil consensus.

It has to be remembered that the EPRLF is already a registered party and EROS is planning to contest the elections under the banner of 'Eelavar Munnani'.Other elements too may jump into the fray, for differing reasons and with different objectives. Whatever cosiderations that impel them they have very little to do with the accord, or the question of autonomy, least of all the goal of Tamil Eelam. Plain and simple, what is shaping is a power struggle.

Not that power struggles are alien to any country. Citizens themselves become participants when those take place within the parameters of a democratic framework. But if bullets are going to dictate the ballot, we are destined to go through another cycle of violence and loss of further lives, **which might distract us from the desired political objectives.** Possibly, there are only two ways that can save us from further wounding, in both of which the option rests largely with the LTTE:

1.An understanding with the Indian government (not necessarily an agreement), which is still not impossible, provided the element of mutual trust is restored through some healthy gesture on the part of the LTTE. Very often, what helps to defuse crisis situations is not mutual abondonment of positions, but positive gestures and face saving formulas. A re-echoing of the very statesman like sentiments expressed by LTTE leader Prabhakaran at the Suthumalai meeting in August last year, and an honest effort to translate them into action would go a long way to prevent the situation from deteriorating further.

2.A conscious, unilateral, dramatic furn-about in the present LTTE stand, which without compromising long-term Tamil interests, can help them to take charge of civil administration. That certainly calls for flexibility, courage of another kind and reposing confidence in the people, and entering the political process either directly or by proxy. After all, the position of the Indian government has always been, until the souring of the atmosphere in recent months, that they were not opposed to an LTTE administration. The Dixit-Prabhakaran agreement did in fact provide for it.

The future

As for the Tamil people at large, we have to deal with the present in the light of the failures of the past, and with a great measure of responsiblity for the future; whether we are living as a part of the soil strewn with skulls and bones, or living out as expatriates free from the death stench. That demands a sense of pragmatism, not mere emotion. If the above two possibilities fail to materialise, where do we go from here? What has been our 'track record' as a people during the 40 years of 'independence'? Are we better off than what we were in 1948, or are we better placed than during British colonialism? Neither. Let alone the political aspects what is the state of our society today?

A sensitive expatriate friend who spent a few days in Jaffna recently told me that killings, abductions, extortions, are happening that have come to be accepted by people as part of their way of life. Which is bad enough. What was infinitely worse, he said, was the ingrowing distrust among the people themselves. No one man is inclined to trust the other, brother, kinsman, friend or neighbour. No one is sure of the other – his intentions, his motives, his manner of survival. Where is the hope for a society that learns to survive on mistrust? The old and the infirm are losing their will to survive. The active and the middle-aged are ready to forego certain cherished values in order to survive. The young generation is growing with hate in their hearts, and with scorn and resentment in their attitudes; they are prepared to lash out at anything that stands on their way, be they elders, teachers or parents. An unseen generation war is brewing, overshadowed by the brutality of other wars, the war between the LTTE and IPKF, the warring between militant groups, and private feuds between families and individuals. How many more generations are we prepared to sacrifice before Tamils can live on their land without fear and with hope?

Emotion and escapism

It could be said that one major reason for Tamil failure in preserving our rights and dignity and self respect is that we have survived far too long on two tangents – Emotion at one end, and Escapism on the other. Tamil politics whether in Sri Lanka or Tamil Nadu, has been built on the loose foundations of Emotion, backed by the flow of the spoken language. The insiduous factor that brought politicians and political parties into power has been platform oratory. The once 'uncrowned king of Jaffna' Mr. G.G.Ponnambalam, had the skill in good measure, and if the late Mr.S.J.V.Chelvanayakam did not have it, others in the party made up for it. I am not talking of the rights and wrongs of policies; only of the means of achieving leadership.

But over the last fifteen years there has been a qualititative change, a very desirable change, in the thinking of our new generation. While a large section of the older generation continued to be escapist in outlook, the new generation that had seen enough of fruitless emotion and the habit of running away, turned to inspired, selfless idealism.

Velupillai Prabhakaran today remains a shining symbol of that. But, of course, that idealism did not come unaccompanied. On the passenger seat was a new face – a face, until then unknown to the tradition-bound, peace-bent, conservative Tamil society. That new face belonged to *VIOLENCE!* The youths knew of no other recourse, and the political leadership could not come up with any other alternative in the face of the spiralling Sinhala mob and State violence. As for

PRABHAKARAN

the people they were left with no choice in the matter. Helvetius said it long ago: **'Every period has its great men, and if these are lacking, it invents them!' Prabhakaran was a totally unlikely leader to emerge out of a society that looked up to a formally 'educated', professional class, for leadership, a society that prided on its old values and placed much store on age, experience, caste, affluence, all adding up to one totality – a leadership of compromise. It was the turbulence of the period that 'invented' Prabhakaran!**

Compromise from strength

Now, compromisers are not necessarily bad people. The human struggle for Life itself is an eternal compromise. But in public life, it all depends on the rationale behind the compromise, the acumen, the timing, choosing the tactical moment to seek a compromise. The motivation should also be free from thoughts of personal benefit. Mr. G.G. Ponnambalamm's compromise in 1948 and his entering the D.S. Senanayake cabinet was a worthless one. When Mr. Chelvanayakam entered into a pact with Mr.S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike in 1957, ten months before the May 1958 riots broke out, that could have proved a useful and tactical compromise, but unfortunately for both the Tamils and Sinhalese, the other party went back on it. In contrast, the TULF's compromise following the aftermath of the 1977 elections proved barren. Had a non-violent, agitational struggle been sustained with the direct participation of the people, there would have been no need to fill the growing aspirational vacuum with guns. In essence, compromise should be sought from a position of strength and not from a state of weakness.

But there comes a point in an armed struggle, where the human cost factor is important, when the leader himself has to take stock of the prevailing odds, and decide whether to go forward, or pause and gain time, or to temporize, or even compromise. That is a decision that no one else can possibly comment on, because by and large, unlike in a revolutionary situation or a mass struggle, the people are not active participants in the struggle; except what ever decision it is, it has to be taken fast at this rapidly developing point of time. But possibly the LTTE leader might well respond in the words of Che Guevara who said shortly before he was killed: "My defeat would not mean that victory is unattainable. There were many who were beaten in trying to reach the summit of Mt. Everest, but in the final result Everest was conquered." That is the kind of romanticism that made Che Guevara what he was, and probably makes Prabhakaran what he is. Looked at in purely military terms, and as an expression of incredible motivation, his defiance of his own government's armed machine and his continuing daring against a regional superpower are undoubtedly worthy of the highest admiration. He has earned more international headlines these past five years than many heads of governments in the contemporary world. But are all these the answer to the gravity of the crisis looming before the Tamils today? We cannot do better than quote the great Lenin himself. He said "It goes without saying, we cannot do without romanticism. An excess of it is better than a deficiency. We have always been in sympathy with revolutionary romantics, even when we disagreed with them." That points to the Tamil dilemma today. In other words what we need at this moment is Romanticism plus; the plus being Pragmatism.

Continued from page 3

Gandhi came to Colombo in July 1987. At a recent meeting, Mrs.Bandaranaike alleged, 'Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has said that there will be no change in Sri Lanka's policy towards this issue under Mr. Premadasa's leadership. I feel he has come to a secret agreement with the Indian Prime Minister to continue this policy'.

However, Mr. Premadasa spelt out his position when he addressed the special sessions of the UNP on 9 October when he was adopted as the party's Presidential candidate:

'The Indo-Sri Lanka Accord is an accord reached between our President and the Prime Minister of India. The President elected by the people of the whole country is empowered to reach such an agreement. A President elected by the people has also the power to abrogate any such agreement . . . I hope to replace the Accord with a Friendship Treaty having greater reciprocity and in keeping with the sovereignty, territorial integrity and the unitary character of our motherland. If we accede or give anything to India, we must get a similar thing in return. This is called reciprocity. If there is no reciprocity, our country gets devalued. Our sovereignty wil get devalued. .

'The presence of a foreign force in any country is an irritant. The Indian Peace Keeping Force came here at the invitation of our President. India confirms that the Peace Keeping Force will leave our shores at anytime the the President requests them to do so . . . .I understand that India is keen to withdraw the Indian Peace Keeping Force. It is reported that the Peace Keeping Force is staying in Sri Lanka until the Provincial Council elections in the North and East are completed.

'One thing is clear. Everyone, every community and every shade of opinion in Sri Lanka is agreed in their opposition to the continued presence of the Indian Peace Keeping Force in our motherland . . . .This is an issue on which all are in agreement unreservedly and unconditionally. If by the time I am elected President, the Indian Peace Keeping Force have not left, I shall ensure that they are withdrawn.

'The Northern and Eastern Provinces have now been merged. You may remember that in my speech in Parliament I prayed that this should not happen. That was my wish. However, the two Provinces have been temporarily merged. The people of the Eastern Province will be provided with an opportunity to decide whether their Province should be separated from the Northern Province or not. This verdict will be given by the people of the Eastern at a poll to be held within an year. When I am elected President, I will extend this opportunity to the people of the Eastern Province as early as possible. I am personally opposed to the merger, as the ratio of Tamil, Muslim and Sinhala people in the Eastern Province is almost equal'.

KITTU & OTHER LTTE MEN FREED

One of the LTTE's top leaders, Sathasivam Krishnakumar, better known as Kittu and over a hundred other LTTE members who have been detained in India were released and flown to Jaffna on 10 October.

Kittu, in a letter addressed to the Indian PM, had previously indicated that he was going to undertake a fast unto death commencing October 10 if he and other LTTE men were not released. It would seem that action of the Indian government was prompted by their desire to avoid the edverse publicity resulting from Kittu's threatened fast.

It is reported that Kittu and many other LTTE men were released in Jaffna on 12 October in the presence of the members of the Co-ordinating Committee of the Joint Citizens Council for the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

COLONISATION OF TAMIL AREAS

THE VALI-OYA OUTRAGE

★ *The injustice and irreparable damage being inflicted by the Sri Lankan government through her continuing colonization of traditional Tamil homeland with the Sinhala community are herein, focussed.*

★ *If it is allowed to succeed, the Vali-Oya Scheme will definitely sever the linkage between the North and the East of our country with dire and permanent consesquences to our people and will also be a repudiation of the spirit and intent of the July accord of 1987.*

We are driven to cry out in anguish:

"Woe unto the Tamil speaking people of Sri Lanka, even unto those of whom, in their innocence, have placed their trust and hopes in the July, 87 Accord".

Brutality and disaster continue to befall our hapless people, the Accord notwithstanding. Dispossession and Sinhala colonization of our traditional homelands continue unabated and with full fury.

Ever since Ceylon was granted her independence in 1948 by the British there has been a planned and well-orchestrated move by successive Sinhala governments to de-stabilise and destroy the fundamental rights, the civil liberties, the economy and the very identity of the Tamil-speaking people of this country. Many were driven away from their places of habitation in predominantly Sinhala areas under the claims that these lands were to be declared sacred Buddhist areas or that these were to be parts of large settlement schemes. Sinhala Buddhist upheavals, sponsored by successive governments, drove many more of our people away from their lands and properties, especially in the years: 1956, 1958, 1961, 1966, 1971, 1976, 1977 and 1983. In many instances the racist Sinhala gangs were led or directed onto their path of murder and mayhem by the very ministers and M.PP. of the State.

The whole Island, from Point Pedro to Dondra Head, was openly acclaimed by the Government as Sinhala Buddhist country of pristine glory and the Tamil community, including those of the upcountry plantation sector, has been fair game for the government's relentless and institutionalized suppression. To gain political clout based on racism, predominantly Tamil Districts were settled with the Sinhala community in large numbers. The extent of this aggression can be gauged when, as an example, we find that, in the Eastern Province a Sinhala population of 4.5% in 1938, has now increased to 33.0% – an eight-fold leap! The Maduru-Oya project is another instance where whole Tamil villages were uprooted, though the motives adduced at that time have later been found to be a cover to supplant the Tamils with Sinhalese.

Then came along the Indian intervention, first, with the avowed intention of succouring the famished people of Jaffna and then as a partner of a solemn accord after assuring that the downtrodden and under-privileged days of the Tamil-speaking people were very soon to end. The largest carrot that was held out to the Tamil-speaking people was that the North and East of the country would have every chance to merge. Alas, so much for our hopes and aspirations! After all, there is the dictum that interests are permanent, whilst friendship or amity is not, in international relations. May be, it is foreseeing such a situation, as at present, that a sizeable proportion of our community expressed its reservations against the Accord, whilst the rest adopted a wait-and-see attitude – the LTTE opting to express its suspicions and distrust openly. The Jayawardena government has thrown sand in the eyes of the Indian government with incredible success. In fact India has proved to be a friend-in-need to the Sri Lankan government in the latter's effort to visit the Tamil-speaking people further with her waywardness and foul deeds, now, under a cloak of international respectability.

The Sri Lankan government has continued her surreptitious efforts at fracturing the geographical continuity of the North-East region of our country on the basis of ethnicity, intensifying her activities especially after the signing of the Accord. Artificial homelands were being created for the Sinhala community in most Tamil Districts and, in recent times, a special politically motivated scheme for exclusively Sinhala families (for more than 3,000 families) was commenced at Manal Aru (a hitherto Tamil name, now changed to Vali-Oya, a Sinhala rendering of the same meaning). This scheme was possible only by driving away the Tamils from their own or leased lands and those who had re-settled thither as upcountry Tamil refugees, the victims of earlier Sinhala riots. Tamil villagers in the vicinity were murdered and all the rest forced to flee in terror, in the face of the onslaughts of the government's military might. In one night itself 29 villagers were murdered at Othiyamalai, a hamlet furthermost from the Vali-Oya colony. A list of villages thus vacated by Tamils is given in appendix-I. Large areas further away were cordoned by the military after murdering or driving out all Tamil inhabitants. No civil officers were permitted to enter these zones where preliminary arrangements were being made to settle those of the Sinhala community. The laws and ordinances of the country were grossly violated as the government agents of the Mullaitivu and Vavuniya Districts, in which parts of the Vali-Oya scheme encroach were totally non-plussed about the government's intents and machinations.

Even the new alienation, of the lands concerned, was done secretively and at Colombo (by the Ministry of Lands) instead of by the relevant government agent and their officials.

How can India disclaim her responsibility for the tearing asunder of the North and of the East of our country, which have been contiguous geographically and in their ethnicity for ages? The recent gazette notification (of 15th April, 1988) indicates that large chunks of land in the Mullaitivu and Vavuniya Districts, the very traditional lands of the Tamil speaking people, are to be forcibly vacated with the government's proclamation that these lands comprise a 'Special area' forthwith. (Vide appendices – II & III). India doesn't enjoy sufficient rapport with the Tamil-speaking people of this country to realise that the present activities of the Sri Lankan government militate against their apsirations and hopes: and, incidentally, hold up the Accord to ridicule and derision and lead to ultimate failure, by not keeping to the intent and spirit of this agreement. The establishement of the Vali-Oya scheme and its blatant expansionism is the thin end of the wedge to fragment the North-East Tamil traditional region permanently and with disastroous consequences for our people. Meanwhile, India continues to look the other way, In her indifference and assumed naivete, whilst 42 of our historic villages are being gobbled up.

We wonder:

Wither the Sri Lankan Government's headlong plunge into religio-social hegemony?

For how much longer will the credibility of the actions of the 2 signatories to the Accord continue to be eroded in the eyes of a desperate and abandoned people?

Does India's long-avowed sympathy for the cause of the under-privileged Tamil-speaking people only manifest

Continued on page 9

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From page 7

itself in effecting cosmetic forms in civil discipline through her armed forces. Will the present situation lead to the permanent implantation and expansion of the Vali-Oya Sinhala colony and to the irrevocable severance of the North-East linkage, thus spelling the doom and perdition of the Tamil-speaking people of this country?

APPENDIX-I

1. The following number of families have been dispossessed of their land by the armed forces of the Sri Lankan government in the latter's bid to create new homlands for the Sinhala community being brought in from other Sinhala districts (based on figures of 1971).

Vavuniya – North Grama Sevaka Officer's Division (Vavuniya District)

Name of Village	No. of families
Ootugulam	01
Vedivaithakallu	89
Sooriyanaru	83
Kallartrukulathiddam	01
Ariyakundacholai	118

No. of Middle-Class farms each of 100 acres or more leased by Tamil business concerns.
(Vavuniya & Mullaitivu Districts)
Radio Kamam
Dollar Farm
Ananda Trading Co.
Jegajothy & Co.
S. Rajaratnam
S. Sellathurai
S. Ambalavanar
D. Nadarajah
Kent Farm
Ceylon Theatres
Ariyakundan
Cargo Boat Co.
Railway Group
Postal Group, etc.

Kokkuthoduvai Grama Sevaka Officer's Division (Mullaitivu District)

Name of village	No. of families
Kokkuthoduvai	861
Karunartukerni	370
Sahalarthuveli	01
Kotaoakerni	19
Vatherthamerdu	19
Uuthiriyankulam	01
Kalnarti	01
Manalkerni	01
Alankulam	23
Vannathipalam	05

Kokkilai Grama Sevaka Officer's Division (Mullaitivu District)

Name of Village	No. of families
Kokkilai	508
Mariyamunai	04
Mahuthuvaram	1004

2. The following number of families are to be dispossessed of their lands in the immediate future under the provisions of the government's gazette notification of 14.4.88:–

Vavuniya – North Grama Sevaka Officer's Division (Vavuniya District)

Name of village	No. of families
Kartupoovarasankulam	91
Kanchuramotai	38
Katkulam	101
Sinnakoramotai	57
Kovilpuliyakulam	81
Maruthodai	54
Nochchikulam	82
Paddadaimurinthakulam	54
Pattikudiyiruppu	351
Thanikallu	12
Thuvaraankulam	49
Unchatkaddi	80

Other Grama Sevaka Officers' Divisions (Mullaitivu District)

Name of Village	No of families
Aladikulam	05
Arumuhathankulam	69
Naiyaru	465
Thannimuriippu	243
Andankulam	49
Kumulamunai	1164
Puliyamunai	16

The details of families of the villages of Thanniyootn, Kanukerni, Murippu, Karnatukerni, Poothanavayal, Periyakulam, Senapulavu, part of Nedunkerni town, Iththimadu, Palampaasi, Mamadu, Thatamalai, Madavalasingamkulam, Kodalikallu, Mamoolai, Othiyamalai, Udanka, Erukalampulavu, Arumuhathankulam, Karadipooval and many others in the District of Vavuniya and Mullaitivu and Villages in the Trinocomalee District (e.g. Thennamaravadi, Kotakerni, Amarivayal & Pulmoddai) with a total approximate family strength of 7,590 in addition, have yet to be included. This will make a total of 13,288 families that have been dispossessed or will be dispossessed of their homelands through the government's scheme a total of 42 villages, in addition to the 14 or so tracts held on leases by Tamil business concerns.

APPENDIX II

– Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka – 1988 04 14

THE MAHAWELI AUTHORITY OF SRI LANKA ACT No.23 OF 1979 ORDER UNDER SECTION 3(1) order No.6

By virtue of the Power vested in me under Section 3(1) of Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka Act No.23 of 1979 I, Lionel Gamini Dissanayake, Minister of Lands, Land Development and Mahaweli Development do hereby declare the area included in the Schedule hereunder as a 'Special Area'

GAMINI DISSANAYAKE
Minister of Lands and Land Development and Minister of Mahaweli Development.

Ministry Ref.MD/WC/GEN.2 (II) 4
Ministry of Mahaweli Development.
No.500,T.B. Jayah Mawatha,
Colombo 10.
28th. March 1988

Schedule showing the Proposed Boundaries of System L.

NORTH –Starting from the Centre point at the Nedunkerni Junction of the Puliyankulam-Mullativu Main Road and running North Eastwards along the Centre line of this road upto the Centre point at the Tanniyuttu Junction.

EAST –From the last mentioned point turning South Eastwards and running along the Centre line of the Tanniyuttu-Kumulamunai Road upto the bank of the Nayaru Lagoon, thence in a Southerly Direction along the Centre line of the Kumulamundi-Andankulam Road upto the point where this road meets the Andankulam Forest Reserve Boundary, thence from this point turning South Eastwards and running along a straight line joining the said point and the Pulleyar Kovil Junction thence from this point turning South Westwards running along the Centre line of the Koddenkerni Tannawarawadi Road upto the Ferry at the Kokkilai Lagoon, thence turning Southward from this point running along the Centre line of the said road upto Tannamarrawadi thence turning South Eastwards and running along the Centre line of the Awaraviyal Road upto the point where this meets the Padaviya Pulmoddai Road.

SOUTH –From the last mentioned point turning Westwards running along the Centre line of the Kebitigollewa-Pulmoddai Road upto the point where the said Centre line meets the Padaviya Right Bank Canal and thence from this point turning Southwards running along the Padaviya Right Bank Canal upto the point where this Channel meets the Centre line of the Kebitigollewa-Pulmoddai Road, thence from this point turning South Westwards and running along the Centre line of this Road upto the point where the said road meets the Kebitigollewa-Padaviya road thence from this point turning Southwards and running along the Centre line of the Padaviya-Kebitigollewa Main Road upto the commencement point of the Padaviya Tank Reservation Boundary close to the 12th mile post thence from this point turning Westwards running along the said reservation boundary upto the Point where this Boundary meets the Mukunu Oya thence from this point turning South Eastwards along a straight line joining the said point and the Sinhya Ulphthhinna Trig Station Point, upto the Trig Station Point and thence from this point turning South Westwards running along the Mahahettiyawahinna Mountain Ridge upto the Mahettiyawahinne Trig Station Point.

WEST –From the last mentioned point turning North Westwards running along a straight line upto the Puliankulanlai Trig Station Point and thence from this point turning North Eastwards running along an arbitrary line up to the starting point.

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Remembering for the future

– the tragedy of the Tamils in Sri Lanka

A.P.VENKATESWARAN
Former Indian Foreign Secretary.

It was the wisdom of our forefathers that prayers are not intended to remove present pain, but to prevent the pain that is yet to come. It behoves us in India, therefore, to reflect on the impetuosity of the actions which have led us into the current impasse. For indeed, a people who do not learn from history are condemned to re-live it.

More than a year has passed since the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement on July 29, 1987, and peace has not come closer by any means. In fact , the re–eruption last October of the conflict, this time between the LTTE and the IPKF, instead of the Sri Lankan security forces, has been markedly more intense and the casualties, on both sides, keep mounting day by day.

Need for national debate.

The latest operation launched by the IPKF on August 15, 1988, seems to be aimed at liquidating the last remaining pockets of LTTE resistance, with little thought for the possible consequences. Looking beyond the immediate results it could have, of leaving the Tamil civilian population in the Northern and Eastern provinces totally defenseless, as and when the IPKF withdraws, it is possible to predict that if Prabrakaran were to die either in the fighting or by swallowing the ever present cyanide capsule hanging round the neck of every LTTE cadre, his martyrdom could give rise to an entirely new situation, where Eelam may become a real possibility in Sri Lanka, and disruptionist forces gain strength in Tamil Nadu. To kill a person is easy. To extinguish an idea is impossible.

The time has come for a national debate where the people of India and especially the people of Tamil Nadu can have a voice in moulding a concensus policy on this question. Instead of remaining silent spectators and unwilling abettors of the mindless killings and counter-killings which are going on between the LTTE on the one hand and the IPKF on the other.

The root of the problem

The Indo-Sri Lanka agreement was long in rhetoric, but short in substance. Because it ignored the realities of the situation, it has only exacerbated an already complicatd problem. For example, Article 1.5 of the Agreement speaks of 'a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious plural society, in which, all citizens can live in equality, safety and harmony and prosper and fulfil their aspirations.' But the problem has arisen precisely because the Tamils of Sri Lanka, who are a people bound together by a shared heritage, a common culture and a common language, have been denied their basic rights as equal citizens with the rest of the Sinhala population.

The minorities in Sri Lanka, both ethnic and religious, have been made to feel for too long that they are not a part of the country, and this process had been systematically enlarged ever since Ceylon was granted independence in February 1948. The first Prime Minister, D.S. Senanayake, had then appealed to the Tamils to accept the new Soulbury Constitution, and declared on behalf of the Sinhalese. "I give the minority communities the sincere assurance that no harm need you fear at our hand in Sri Lanka." The Tamils accepted this assurance. But events soon took a different turn.

To begin with, the plantation Tamils were deprived of their citizenship in 1948 and thereafter, disenfranchised in 1949 by the Sinhala Government soon after it assumed power. After this was done, regulations were enforced where proof of citizenship was made obligatory for employment in the public and private sectors, for the issue of travel documents, for obtaining licences and for taking part in business or any other meaningful activity. These measures were clearly in violation of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights which provides: "Everyone has a right to a nationality. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality." It is to India's eternal shame that in the various Agreements which have been concluded with Sri Lanka on the repatriation of persons of Indian origin, the latter, who are intimately affected, were never consulted at any stage about their future. So too, the India-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 29, 1987, which was ostensibly concluded to make peace between the ethnic Tamils and the Sinhalese population of Sri Lanka, was concluded between the Government of India and the Government of Sri Lanka with no thought of consulting those whose fate was being determined by it.

Lopsided Implementation

What has been more reprehensible is that even the clauses of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, such as they are, have largely remained a dead letter. Not merely because of the difference with the LTTE, but also because of the manifest reluctance of the Sri Lankan Government, from the very begining, to carry out its obligations. At least, the LTTE could claim that it was never a signatory to the Agreement, but no such plea can be put forward by Sri Lanka. On the other hand, the Sri Lankan authorities are pushing ahead with the so–called resettlement of displaced Sinhala families in the Eastern Province, while taking no corresponding steps to restore the land or properties of the Tamils who have been driven from their hearths and homes.

As Justice Krishna Iyer has pointed out in one of his erudite articles on the subject:

"These clauses form a package and stand or fall together. You cannot ask for surrender of arms, inflicting lethal disablement on the resistance movement which has gathered momentum, but do nothing to enforce the imperative undertakings of Sri Lanka's President. The Indian Prime Minister, obsessed with his (illusory) authority over the Tamil militants, talks all the time of surrender of arms as the essence of the accord. The soul of the agreement is to hold elections, to lift the Emergency, to grant amnesty and to begin the formation of a joint province. A priority item is the quantum and quality of the devolution of powers, so that the reality of autonomy

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may be brought home constitutionally to the minority consciousness.

"There is a pledge in Clause 14 that these matters will be resolved between India and Sri Lanka within a period of six weeks of signing the agreement, that is, before the middle of September 1987. This has certainly not been carried out . . . A monitoring body to review the progress of the implementation is provided for, so that failures on both sides may be exposed and complaints in that behalf heard. No such functional watchdog has yet been created."

Confusion worse confounded

Frantic efforts have been made by the apologists of the Accord to take shelter behind the 'gains' which accrue to India from the letters exchanged along with it between the Sri Lankan President, Mr.J.R. Jayhewardene and the Prime Minister, Mr.Rajiv Gandhi, which provide assurances from the former to the latter on certain security issues. But it is conveniently overlooked that foreign military and intelligence personnel continue to be present in Sri Lanka and no efforts have been made to review the foreign broadcasting facilities set up on the island. The commitments on Tricomalee can only be tested over time. So the claims concerning India's security have no substance.

The irony of the situation is further highlighted by the absurdity of entrusting the 'unofficial' negotiations, which have been taking place with the LTTE in Madras, to the Research and Analysis wing (R&AW) of the Cabinet Secretariat. This body has all along been playing a shadowy and dubious role, interacting with the various militant Tamil groups. It is an open secret that, in an earlier phase of the internecine struggle which had occurred between the TELO and the LTTE, this organisation had played a negative role. There is little doubt that it is the undermining of the legitimate functions of different departments of Government, the order of business, that has resulted in the sorry state of affairs which we face today. The sooner this is realised and mended, the better it will be for us all.

The bizarre drama enacted some weeks ago by the Sri Lanka Government in its so–called negotiations with the Janata Vimukti Peramuna (JVP) for an agreement for granting amnesty to its cadres – which was immediately, after its signature, denouced by the JVP leadership as a forgery fabrication – shows the extent to which the Sinhala leadership is prepared to go in misleading public opinion. The exercise with the JVP was an obvous ploy to defuse the criticism by the SLFP, and timed for the Provincial elections in the South, through granting amnesty to JVP cadres. That the killings of the UNP members by the JVP continues and is now totalling nearly 400 victims is proof, if proof is needed, that the JVP has not been taken in, nor is it in a mood to come to a settlement with the authorities.

The difference between the hamhanded approach of the Government of India towards the LTTE and the handling with kidgloves of the JVP by the Government of Sri Lanka stand in stark contrast, and any intelligent observer can draw his own conclusions from it. One may devoutly hope that the special consideration being show by Mr. Jayerwardene to the JVP is not with the intention of using that organisation's antipathy towards the Tamils in Sri Lanka and thereby subserve the negative policies of his Government.

Learning from history

The Tamils have been in Sri Lanka ever since the dawn of history. The ancient capital of Anuradhapura was founded by the Tamil Kings in 3rd century B.C. The Tamil Kingdom of Jaffna was captured by the Portuguese in 1621, a century after, they had landed in Ceylon and the Tamil King Sankili was then taken to Goa and hanged. Then came the Dutch, and later the island passed into the hands of the British.

The very first Colonial Secretary of Ceylon, Sir Hugh Cleghorn, had written,

"Two different nations, from very ancient period, have divided between them the possession of the island, the Sinhalese inhabiting the interior in its Southern and Western parts . . . and the Malabars (another name for the Tamils) who possess the Northern and Eastern districts. These two nations differ entirely in their religions, language and manners".

It is clearly not acceptable for any Government in Sri Lanka to overlook the legitimate rights of the Tamil population in that country nor to deny it equality with others. And it would be totally unsustainable for India even to appear to condone such a policy.

Looking to the future

With all its faults, the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of July 1987 still provides a basis, slender though it is, to right some of the many wrongs which have been suffered by the Tamils at the hands of the Sinhala majority. The devolution would, however, have to be enlarged, and guarantees provided for preventing a recurrence of events like those which had taken place in 1983 and after. For this process to move forward, and for the wounds to heal, the first step would be for the Government of India to order the IPKF to observe an immediate ceasefire, and start to rebuild the confidence and trust of the Tamil Community which has been so severely shaken by the eruption of hostilities between the IPKF and the LTTE on October last year.

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Going by the statements of the Government of India, such as they are, the effective resistance of the LTTE has now been largely overcome. The logic, then, of continuing a massive operation, which has been stepped up even last week, is far from clear and can only be counter-productive.

One of the resolutions adopted at the International Tamil Conference held in London in May this year has defined the problem well. While calling for a just political settlement of the conflict in Sri Lanka on the basis of the recognition of the political realities, it declares: "There exists in Sri Lanka today two nations – the Tamil Nation and the Sinhala Nation . . . the two nations may agree to live together by force of reason but cannot be compelled to live together by force or arms". And so it shall be!

Courtesy of 'The Hindu', 2.9.88

READERS' FORUM

THE HINDU' and editorial decorum

Someone had to say it, and *TAMIL TIMES* contributor Mr. Sachi. Sri. Kantha of Tokyo has said it. In a letter to the Editor in the HINDU (Aug. 19), which the paper was gracious enough to publish, Mr. Sachi.Sri Kantha wrote:–

"Sir – Your editorial 'Peace in Sri Lanka: What needs to be done' (THE HINDU international edition, Aug.6) needs some comments. Having been a reader of THE HINDU for the past 15 years, I could sense a change of direction in your reporting on the Sri Lankan scene since the 1987 Rajiv–Jayewardene peace agreement. Until mid–May 1987, you had correctly portrayed the dictatorial whims of President Jayewardene in the editorials, articles and cartoons. Somehow, he had become your trusted Sri Lanka politician, from August 1, 1987.

"While commenting on the disbursing and monitoring of Rs.50 crores for the rehabilitation of LTTE cadres, your editorial implied that the present rule of Jayewardene is a 'legitimate sovereign government'. Nothing is far from the truth. Early this year, one of the chief negotiators of the Rajiv-Jayewardene Agreement (former Finance Minister of Sri Lanka, Ronnie de Mel) had questioned the moral authority of the present Sri Lanka government which had extended its stay in power by undemocratic means since 1983.

"The Sri Lanka citizens were never given the opportunity to elect their parliamentary representatives in a general election for the past seven years. And you call it 'legitimate'. Sri Lankan Tamils in particular (especially those in the Northern and Eastern provinces) never gave a mandate to the UNP to rule them in the last held 1977 general election. Only one Tamil M.P. was elected on the UNP ticket (in the Eastern province) by a slender majoriity of nearly 550 plurality votes. I do not question your right to support President Jayewardene But please do not insult the intelligence of Sri Lankan readers by making wild statements which lack common sense".

As Mr. Sachi Sri Kantha has said, THE HINDU has changed direction after July 29, 1987. Among the depressing fall-outs of the accord, this has been one. While Mr. Sachi.Kantha has in this instance confined hmself to the aberrations in THE HINDU's comments, there is another aspect which calls for greater concern, and that is the paper's growing lack of decorum in the reporting of the news itself; a tendency that cannot do any good to a paper that had acquired an international reputation over the years. Comment is free, but facts are sacred in responsible journalism.

As an example of motivated reporting on the part of THE HINDU, we present here the reports of the same incident carried in the INDIAN EXPRESS of Aug 14, and in THE HINDU of the same day. The INDIAN EXPRESS reported thus:–

Colombo, Aug. 13 (AFP): Tamil rebels killed seven Indian soldiers and injured four in the first of two attacks on the Colombo-Jaffna rail link in north-eastern Vavuniya district on Saturday, a military spokesman here said. The Indian soldiers were clearing the rail track in Kanakarayankulam village for the north-bound train when the rebels exploded a land mine, the spokesman said. The Jaffna train, which left Colombo on Friday night, reached Vavuniya town on Saturday morning and was waiting the all-clear signal to proceed when the incident occurred, the official added. In the second incident, guerrillas blasted the rail track in Mankulam town farther north, preventing the train from proceeding . . .

In contrast, THE HINDU version reads thus :-

Madras, Aug. 13. An attempt by the LTTE to blow up a fully loaded passenger train in Vavuniya sector was today foiled by the timely action of the IPKF. However, the IPKF lost six of its personnel when the LTTE blew up a culvert. An IPKF press release issued here said the the LTTE had planned to blow up a passenger train in Vavuniya sector and had placed four explosive devices on a culvert on the rail track, six kms. south of Mankulam. IPKF troops searching the track detected the explosive devices in time. The LTTE in panic blew up the culvert prematurely resulting in six casualties to IPKF personnel but the train was safely stopped at Puliyankulam and the passengers and the train were saved . . . .

The report was headlined – LTTE BID FOILED. According the the EXPRESS report, and in the minds of all intelligent and objective readers, the sequence of events was very clear. The LTTE blew up the track, preventng the train from prooceeding. The IPKF went to the spot to restore the track and in the process became victims of a LTTE-triggered land mine. It would be straining the credulity of Sri Lankan readers (both Tamils and Sinhalese) that the LTTE could be so foolish as to blow up a train carrying hundreds of Tamil passengers; to ask readers to believe that they are politically 'intransigent' is one thing; but to tell them that the LTTE is capable of crass stuppidity is something which should be told to the marines. But the sad truth is, THE HINDU would have succeeded in misleading lakhs of Indian readers who depend upon the paper alone for their information.

The tragedy of THE HINDU is the tragedy of newspaper editors who allow themselves to be sucked into the decision-making processes of their governments!

S. Kurushetran
Madras
Tamil Nadu

THE TRAGEDY OF K. KANTHASAMY: A DISASTER FOR THE TAMIL CAUSE

What a few stupid and cowardly men have done to one brave and good man and what the rest of the community to which they all belong seem to have been unble to stop - has put the entire Tamil cause back by twenty years.

K.Kanthasamy is (I desperately hope I can still say 'is' and do not have to say 'was') someone of whom the Tamil people of Sri Lanka have every reason to be proud. He is an outstanding lawyer. Had he wished to, he might have followed the example of many of his colleagues: kept to well-paid commercial work, and made a great deal of money. Instead, he answered the call of his people in need, and devoted all his time and talents to the relief of their suffering. He was a founder member, and the first Secretary, of TRRO, The Tamil Refugees Rehabilitation Organisation, and also helped to found the Theepam Institute. For more than ten years, and at increasing risk to his health, he worked indefatigably for the relief of people in need, and for the vindication of their human rights. He played an active part in the Tamil Information Centres in London ,Madras, and Madurai. By his work, and the international respect he gained through it, he made a huge contribution to the recognition of the Tamil cause throughout the world.

As his reward, he has been kidnapped by a group of militants who claim to be working for the same cause as his. They call themselves EROS, the Eelam Revolutionary Organisers. First they threatened him, saying they would disruupt any rehabilitation work that did not conform with their policy- while refusing to say what their policy was. Then they threatened

TRRO. Finally, on 19 JUNE, they came to his residence in a van and took him away. Three months have gone by since then, and Kanthasamy has not been seen again.

During a live broadcast in the BBC World Service earlier this year, in which President Jayawardene and I both took part, I accused his security forces of arranging 'disappearances'. I am profoundly shocked that I now have to repeat that accusation, this time against men who claim to be engaged in the liberation of their countrymen from oppression by those very same forces.

Making someone 'disappear' is among the most contemptible things that men of violence do to those whom they fear. Whoever does it thereby renders themselves contemptible, whether they call themselves freedom fighters or security forces. And in invoking the world's justified contempt for their actions, they bring it down also on the cause they profess to serve.

Apart from this shocking act, I know nothing of EROS, or of those of its members (they called themselves Ravi, Vasanthan, and Andrew Joseph) who took part in it, or of their leader Balakumar who authorised it. But I have a simple message for them. Here it is:

"If you think that you have ever done anything for the liberation of your people, you have now wilfully thrown it away. Without support in the international forum outside your Island, Tamil liberation is a lost cause. That support depends critically on outstanding men like Kanthasamy. If he is hurt or killed, the support is forfeited and it is you who are responsible for that. So, if your professed concern for the liberation of your people is genuine, then for their sake I ask you to release him at once."

I hope that someone who reads this message will ensure that it is delivered to those to whom it is addressed. And I also hope that the many others who will read it, or hear of it, will do all they can to ensure that my call is answered.

Paul Sieghart
Chairman, JUSTICE
London, WC1

AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS ON KANTHASAMY:

Brian Senewiratne and David Selbourne

Your readers may find some interest in the following exchange of letters. It represents our reaction to the abduction, and presumed death, of our friend Kanthasamy, and sums up our feelings on the present situation in Sri Lanka.

David Selbourne

August 6, 1988
Dear David,

. . . You may have heard that our mutual friend Kanthasamy, ex-Tamil Information Centre, London, was kidnapped by EROS and almost certainly killed. I have made my own protest in Australia and outside, saying that if this is what Eelam is all about, they can fight whatever battles they want, but I'll be opting out. He had refused to make TRRO funds available to EROS for their 'rehabilitation' work – a civilised term for the purchase of weapons! He was warned twice and then abducted on 19th June; he has not been seen since. Amnesty International, the Civil Rights Movement in Colombo, and scores of human rights and church groups, and non-governmental organizations, have mounted a huge protest. The Tamils, characteristically, are for the most part silent. I've asked the question, 'Why? Are you afraid of the friends of EROS and the LTTE?'

I have also just returned from Nanuet, N.Y. The meeting was one of the best I've attended. The standard of papers was outstanding. I think you should listen to the tapes – I've got the entire proceedings on video. I'll transcribe onto audio cassettes, and send them to you . . . .

Kind regards,
Brian

Sept 1, 1988.
Dear Brian,

Thanks very much for your letter of August 6th, which I was happy to have.

. . . The disappearance and probable death of poor Kanthasamy has afflicted me like no other horror of the Sri Lankan Disaster. He was one of the very best and most honest of men, and equal to twenty of your Prabhakarans and other such tinpot heroes, who are leading the Tamils towards a long-term political and moral disaster, which the present savagery of the conflict, and the resolutions of support from this or that useless conference, prevent them from seeing.

That EROS could do this, and get away with it with such little genuine Tamil condemnation, condemns the Tamil cause itself to perdition. But there is no need for me to condemn it. It is self-condemning, and, after all, who am I? In any case, the Tamil cause itself, as a moral struggle for justice, had begun to be lost once the killings of innocent Sinhalese citizens, at the hands of Tamil 'freedom fighters, had begun a few years ago. Moreover, despite the struggle, I now think that there will neither be Eelam, nor 'true' federalism, nor genuine devolution, nor anything else which is just and fair to the Tamils this century,if ever. I had not wanted to say this out in the open earlier, because it would have lent some legitimacy to the wickedness of Colombo, which is incorrigible also. But since the presumed death of Kanthasamy, I think that such silence is pure cowardice.

Continued on page 15

EROS DENIES ABDUCTION OF KANTHASAMY

The Tamil militant group, Eelam Revolutionary Organisation, has officially denied responsibility for the abduction of K.Kanthasamy. In a statement issued on July 3, EROS stated:

"It has been our observation that the freedom struggle of the Tamil-speaking people, with its immense sacrifices, has also been beset with mysterious incidents from time to time. The news of such an occurrence, wherein Mr. Kandasamy has disappeared ever since 19th June is enough to shock the sensibilities of most people. Mr. Kandasamy, a stalwart of the TRRO, has been well known to us ever since he made our acquaintance on 1st August 1977 though his organisatin. At that time he was instrumental in our winning whole-hearted support for establishing our model farm at Kannati, thus contributing to the growth of our organisation. He laboured unceasingly to reveal to the world at large the incessant miseries on Tamil-speaking people, apart from fighting for their human rights and other benefits. We are well aware of the munificence characterising his actions.

"There was no animosity generated between us on the occasions we disagreed: and it is a well known fact that we always endeavoured to resolve our differences through dialogue.

"However we are aware that false allegations of our organisation being responsible for Mr. Kanthasamy's disappearance are now being levelled against our organisation. Similarly, a few weeks ago the story that our organisation was responsible for the goings-on at the Jaffna University was being disseminated. Such insidious information being circulated about our organisation, inspite of our categorical disavowals only prompts us to exercise a measure of surveillance in the future, to counter vicious and deliberate falsehoods against us by forces inimical to our organisation. We earnestly appeal that, irrespective of those who are responsile for his disappearance and irrespective of the reasons thereof, Mr. Kanthasamy be set free immediately."

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Continued from page 13

As for your role, it will always be remembered as absolutely heroic in its way, and you could do no less, and no more, than you have done. You were right to do it. But the truth is that despite the excellence of the talk in Nanuet, to which you have referred, it makes no difference to the fact that the Tamils have lost the moral war – and will eventually lose the political one also – even though they have 'won' a few of the guerrilla military battles, and will go on 'winning' this or that encounter in the next 10 years. They will also go on bumping off innocent Sinhalese citizens – an easy matter to achieve – just as Sinhalese (and now Indians) will go on bumping off innocent Tamils. But without morally worthy and politically significant leaders the Tamils will get nowhere. Their struggle has often been courageous, but it has not got them where they think it has got them. You know that I don't think them any nearer real and lasting political advances now than they were 5 years ago. Your compatriots are far too skilful (and cynical) for them. But abducting and killing Kanthasamy!! What low brutishness was that? What does it say of the men who did it? Answer: they are no better than the drunken gangsters who killed Rajasunderam in Welikade Prison . . .

Yours ever,
David

MORE LETTERS ON ABDUCTION

Mr. Kandasamy, the selfless social worker dedicated his life time to the rehabilitation activities of the affected Tamil people and has also been an ardent advocate for Human Rights and a person deeply concerned with rehabilitation work in the Tamil areas which suffered under the ethnic disturbances.

He was a popular international personality well known and recognised among the non-governmental Organisations and funding agencies and have been their trusted personality through whom they implemented their funding activities as evidenced from the joint appeal made by all foreign agencies.

The news of his disappearance is a shock to the people of Mannar district for whom Mr. Kandasamy joined in our efforts towards relief and rehabilitation activities for the affected people. The affected fisher folk of Talaimannar village are in deep shock and sorrow and are grateful to this simple and self-effacing man whose honest and sincere objective was to rehabilitate the affected fishermen families to achieve a self reliant and decent life under the project activity funded by the Norwegian Refugee Council through the Refugee Rehabilitation Organisation Ltd., and implemented through the Mannar Association for relief and rehabilitation.

The presence of Mr. Kandasamy is vital to the rehabilitation, reconstruction and humanitarian services of the affected Tamil people. We hope and pray that he will once again be able to serve the affected masses.

Rev. Fr. A. Xavier Croos
President Mannar Association
for Relief and Rehabilitation.

It is now three months since Mr K. Kanthasamy was reported abducted from his Jaffna residence. It is also a tragedy that his whereabouts or even his existence is still not known. The abductors despite numerous appeals from human rights organisations around the world and activists, Tamils and other, have not responded in any manner. They have not accepted responsibility nor have they justified their actions.

Fr.Chandra Fernando was killed approximately a month before Mr Kanthasamy's abduction. These actions, by whoever maybe, have the same result – damage the sympathy the international governments, organisations and respected human rights activists, have for the Tamil liberation struggle, which the Tamils in Sri Lanka can ill afford at this time. They also have the effect of frustrating and alienating the expatriate Tamils.

Undoubtedly, Mr. Kanthasamy, whatever his affiliations might have been, has done an invaluable service to the Tamil community and Tamil liberation struggle for over a decade.

It is important that even at this last moment – if Mr Kanthasamy is still alive – to release him immediately. It will be an excellent service to humanity and a tribute to the liberation struggle (and the battered Tamil community as a whole).

We sincerely appeal to those responsible to release Mr. Kanthasamy without any further delay.

S.K. Somasundaram
Secretary, Australasian Federation
of Tamil Associations.
New South Wales, Australia. 12.9.1988

DICTATOR ZIA'S DEATH

In mid-August, by a sudden hair-raising trick resembling that of a master magician, the Grim Reaper zapped the life of Pakistan's military dictator Zia ul Haq. On hearing about the unexpected death of the dictator, his political foe Benazir Bhutto was quoted as saying: "I don't regret the death of Zia". I'm sure all over the world, those who respect democracy and human rights, share Benazir Bhutto's sentiments.

Since 1983, General Zia was one of the central figures involved in the ethnic turmoil in Sri Lanka. The military dictator he is, Zia teamed up with the Jayewardene government to suppress political opposition (both Tamil and Sinhalese) in Sri Lanka. Most importantly, General Zia provided military help (armaments, training facilities and personnel) to Jayewardene's regime for use against Tamil civilians and Tamil rebels. Many Indian journalist had reported that Pakistan's military pilots were employed for the aerial bombing in the Tamil regions of Sri Lanka.

Jayewardene and Zia became allies during the past decade, due to their shared interest in (a) the dictatorial style of governance; (b) contempt for democracy; and (c) humiliating the opposition political leaders. Both came to power in 1977. General Zia eliminated his predecessor Ali Bhutto by execution in 1979. Gratitude is one word which is missing in a dictator's dictionary. And General Zia provided an excellent example for this. Jayewardene, following Zia's lead, First deprived his predecessor Sirimavo Bandranaike's civic rights on flimsy grounds in 1980. Then in 1983, Jayewardene eliminated Tamil representation in the Sri Lankan parliament by an amendment to the document, which pass as '1978 Sri Lankan Republican Constitution'. It is an open secret that both, Zia and Jayewardene, shared a common professional enmity to Indira Gandhi. After Indira Gandhi's tragic death in 1984, her son Rajiv was irked by the Zia-Jayewardene alliance. It had been reported in Indian and International press that the deployment of Indian military personnel in Sri Lanka was made to severe the Jayewardene-Zia military ties, which had created a mess in the southern front of India.

It should be interpreted that, rather than being a saviour of Sri Lankan Tamils, Rajiv Gandhi was acting more in concern for his own country's territorial defence. So Eelam Tamil issue became a pawn in international power play between India and Pakistan. Zia's intrusion into Sri Lankan military politics was one of the causes for Rajiv's flexing of military muscles in the Northern and Eastern regions of the island. Of course, I'm not defending Rajiv Gandhi's actions cince Aug.1987. But, given the situation he faced (and importantly, the inexperience he has had in dealing with the wily dictators Zia and Jayewardene), one could grasp Rajiv's predicament. Rajiv's mother Indira knew the tricks of the trade of how to keep 'cunning foxes' in their kennel. But Rajiv acted like a novice in international politics. And this explains his bungling of strategy since Aug.1987.

Now that the Grim Reaper had played His card in removing General Zia from the scene, one fervently hopes that Rajiv Gandhi will come to his senses to provide some leadership, in which his grandfather and mother excelled themselves.

Sachi, Sri Kantha
Tokyo

JUGGLING WITH THE JAPANESE AID

by
Sachi. Sri Kantha
University of Tokyo, Japan

The dictionary defines 'juggle' as: (1) to keep (two or more balls or other objects) continuously moving from the hand into the air. (2) to manipulate dishonestly. What I meant in the title as juggling relates to the second definition and in this commentary, I wish to describe the Sri Lankan government's deals with Japan in getting the much wanted foreign aid and what has been happening on the Tokyo front for the past three years. This period also was noted for the change of status of the USA from the largest creditor nation to the largest debtor nation. Now, Japan has become the largest creditor nation and all 'eyes and hands' are directed towards Tokyo.

As shown on Table 1, Japan is one of the principal trading partners of Sri Lanka. From Japan, industrial machinery, automobiles, household electrical items and farm equipments are imported by Sri Lanka. The exports to Japan are mostly marine food products, gem stones, black tea, spices and raw industrial materials such as ilmenite and graphite.

Table 1:Sri Lanka's Trade with Japan
(in US$ 1000)

Year	Imports from Japan Amount	(as % of global trade)	Exports to Japan Amount	(as % of global trade)
1980	260,378	12.8	33,384	3.2
1981	259,209	14.4	50,333	4.9
1982	268,848	15.2	50,222	5.0
1983	317,240	17.7	48,264	4.5
1984	307,525	16.6	62,393	4.3

Source: UN – 1985 Year book of International Trade Statistics, Rome 1987.

For 30 years, no Japanese Prime Minister had visited Sri Lanka; Nobusuke Kishi was the last one to do so in 1957. After Rajiv-Jayewardene Peace Accord, Japan's Foreign Minister Tadashi Kuranari visited Colombo. He 'pledged 145 million US dollars in yen loans and outright grants to the Sri Lanka government for development projects' (DAILY YOMIURI, Aug.13, 1987). Of this, approximately 140 million dollars was to be in yen loans at a reduced interest rate of 0.275 percent per annum for financing, (a) hydropower projects (b) third phase of the Colombo Port expansion projects; and (c) commodity products. The outright grant of nearly 5 million dollars was for development of a genetic resources centre and the supply of musical instruments to school children.The way the Sri Lankan economy is sagging for the past five years, we have no doubt that the Jayewardene government will not keep its pledge of paying the reduced interest loan.

Pet project

In 1985 and 1986, Japan extended to Sri Lanka 14.5 and 17 billion yen respectively (approximately 230 million US dollars in total) in loans to finance a hydroelectric project in the Southern region of the island (JAPAN TIMES, Aug 7. 1986 and Feb 4 .1987). The then Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone also pledged that 'Japan will contribute another 500,000 dollars for a project to build a UN centre commemorating the 1987 International Year of Shelter for the Homeless', the pet project of Prime Minister Premadasa.

In 1986 fiscal year, Sri Lanka received the fifth largest grant in aid (next to Bangladesh, Thailand, Philippines and Burma) from Japan. The amount granted by Japan was 9,145 million yen (approximately 70 million US dollars). But the Japanese government report released in last July stated that for the past few years, annual meeting with the donor agencies in Japan were not held by Sri Lanka, on how the aid had been used (MAINCHI DAILY NEWS July 12 1988). The defense expenditure under Jayewardene's presidency had increased from 30 million dollars in 1977 to over 400 million, last year. So, how the aid money from Japan would have been spent by Sri Lanka is anybody's guess. But there is no doubt that the Japanese aid wouldn't have benefited the Tamil speaking Northern and Eastern Provinces.

The MAINICHI DAILY NEWS of Aug. 25, 1987, reported the Sri Lankan sentiments about the incoming foreign aids, last year: 'The United States has been publicly criticized for the amount of aid it has accorded. Colombo also regrets the drying up of aid from Arab countries, provoked by its relationship with Israel. Colombo turned to Tel Aviv for military needs, including modernization of its intelligence communications net work. Japan's contribution (presently) amounts to one–third of total international aid to Sri Lanka'.

The then Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel openly criticised the USA in October 1987 for the decrease in U.S. development and food aid from 100 million dollars to 20 million dollars between 1985 and 1987 (MAINICHI DAILY NEWS, Oct.4, 1987) Of course, the Reagan administration has been saddled with it's fiscal deficit and trade deficit problms. Furthermore, the US diplomatic intelligence would also have suggested that the Jayewardene government is following the path of Marcos–style deterioration. This explains for the reduction of American aid to the wily politician who had built his career with the nickname 'Yankee Dick'.

Dictionary scheme

The JAPAN TIMES of Nov.6, 1987 reported that Japan will provide another 562 million yen (approximately 4.16 million dollars) to Sri Lanka 'to help its fishing ports maintenance project'. Those fishing ports which are badly in need of maintenance are located in the Northern and Eastern provinces; but, I'll be a fool if I assert that this Japanese aid will be used to develop the Northern and Eastern fishing ports of Sri Lanka. In another recent news item, which appeared in the JAPAN TIMES, it became known that Japan is also providing millions of yen (amount not quoted) in terms of modern equipments for production of a grand Sinhalese Dictionary scheme.

Last year, Sri Lankan President's science adviser, Prof. Cyril Ponnamperuma informed the international scientific community that the Japanese government had pledged to provide a grant of 5.7 million dollars to the Institute of Fundamental Studies in Colombo (SCIENTIST, June 29, 1987), though they had requested only 2.8 million dollars in their proposal. Ponnamperuma was quoted as saying that, this was the first instance in which his grant funding had been doubled rather than reduced, from the requested amount. But, how much of this research grant will be spent for research development in the Tamil-speaking provinces? Jayewardene and Ponnamperuma know it and we also know it.

After the Bangalore SAARC Summit in late 1986, the JAPAN TIMES wrote an editorial entitled, 'A Step toward Solving Tamil Problem' (Nov.24, 1986). While correcting some of the factual errors in this editorial, I also wrote to this newspaper:

"... What you have overlooked is the fact that foreign aid (especially economic aid from Japan) should also be equitably distributed to the provinces where Tamils form a majority.

"To cite an instance of such discrimination, may I mention that a new teaching hospital for the University of Peradeniya in the predominantly Sinhala-speaking central region was

completed with Japanese aid in 1980. A similar offer by Japanese agencies to build a teaching hospital to the University of Jaffna in the northern region was stonewalled by the present government.

"If anyone were patient enough to conduct a statistical survey on the distribution of Japanese aid in Sri Lanka over the past 20 years, and tabulate how much of it benefited Tamil-speaking regions, one would understand the anger of the younger generation of Tamils . . ."(JAPAN TIMES,Dec.8, 1988).

Obviously, the Sri Lankan Embassy in Tokyo was pricked by this exposure. So, they responded to my letter, through the name of one Mr.K.A. Gunasena of Tokyo. He wrote: ". . . The complaint that economic aid has been distributed in a discriminatory manner in Sri Lanka is without foundaton. Japanese assistance has been given for 'national' projects, particularly in the area of infra-structure – modernization of Colombo's port and airport, telecommunications, television services, health and electric power developement. These projects benefit the country as a whole . . ."(JAPAN TIMES, Dec.26,1986). But, the correspondent Gunasena didn't rebut my observation that the offer for building a teaching hospital at Jaffna was stonewalled by the Jayewardene government.

Battleground for dissidents

Tokyo has become a battleground between the Press Attaches of many repressive regimes and their dissidents (who expose the sleaze in their home countries). In the English newspapers of Japan, you could see continuous appearance of letters from the press officers of South African, Ethiopian, Cuban, Iranian, Northern Irish, Philippines (and Indian!) embassies, rebutting the descriptions of dissidents and opponents. In my three years in Tokyo, I've noticed that the Sri Lankan embassy here, conducts this function via individuals or through groups like 'Sri Lanka Students' Association – Japan'. All the repressive regimes are concerned about bad publicity in Tokyo.

On May 3, 1986, the Air Lanka Tristar jetliner bomb blast tragedy which occurred at the Colombo International Airport killed 20 foreign tourists. There were eight Japanese (four young honeymooning couples) who had boarded that ill-fated plane, on their way to Maldives. Of the four couples, Kideyuki Mizusawa and his wife Cheiko from Takasaki, Gunma Prefecture of Japan were killed. Another couple (Toshiya Kobayashi and his wife Toshiko from Yokohama) suffered serious injuries. Other two couples miraculously escaped from any injuries. It was reported in the newspapers and TV that LTTE had claimed to have planted the bomb (MAINICHI DAILY NEWS, May 6, 1988). Then the Jayewardene government jumped on this misery to smear the Sri Lankan Tamils in the mass communication media. This bomb tragedy received much publicity in Japan, since it occurred around the time when the Heads of leading industrialized nations of the Free World GROUP SEVEN were in Tokyo for their Annual Economic Summit. At this gathering, on President Reagan's initiative, they passed a resolution on international terrorism.

When I visited Sri Lanka in late 1986, I saw how this tragedy was covered in the newspapers there. The OBSERVER (Aug,24,1986) had a front page story written by Rajika Wijenaike, with the caption, 'The tomb tells the story' with the photo of one of Japanese victim's mother and the tomb of the killed couple. The Japanese inscription in the tomb read as:

"Showa 61, 29th April – Marriage ceremony was held at Takasaki Shrine

1st May – Left Narita Airport on the honeymoon

3rd May – Died due to an explosion of a bomb planted by Tamil terrorists, on the Colombo-Male flight, at Katunayake International Airport

6th May – Cremated at General Cemetry, Kanatte

8th May – Ashes were brought to Japan".

My other newsclippings of English newspapers in Sri Lanka also showed, how the Jayewardene government was actively pursuing the Japanese market. Some examples:

"Concerted campaign to capture Japanese market to our handicraft" (OBSERVER, Sept.21, 1986).

"Boosting Sri Lankan exports to Japan" (ISLAND, Oct. 12,1986)

"Boosting Lanka's image in Japan" (ISLAND, Nov.2,1986).

And Jayewardene himself was reminiscing about how he gave that great speech at the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty Conference siding with Japan ('My happiness – my speech strengthened Sri Lankan – Japanese ties; President,' SUNDAY OBSERVER, Oct.5, 1986):

". . . That was in September 1951, six years after the Second World War ended. When I visited Japan, 50 percent of the city was in a shambles, the harbour was in a shambles. We were staying in a hotel and in the hotel there were rats. I had to sleep on a bed which was too short for me and I slept on the ground . . .From there I went to San Francisco . . . India, China, Burma and several countries boycotted the conference. Everyone spoke against Japan. When my turn came Lord Buddha's words: 'Hatred does not cease by hatred but by love' came to my mind. Japan had bombed Sri Lanka and created a great loss. I said we should not take revenge from Japan but lend a helping hand to them to raise their head as a nation . . ."

The strategy

Let us not be parochialistic. What Jayewardene gave at San Francisco was a memorable speech, supporting Japan. He had a good streak of foresight then. Now this brings me to that word known as 'strategy'.

The word 'strategy' is derived from the Greek word *strategos,* which means, 'the art of the general'. In a military sense, strategy could mean the following; (1) ways in which a general seeks to deceive an enemy (2) plans he makes for a campaign (3) ways he moves and disposes his forces in a war. The ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA states, 'the term strategy has expanded far beyond its original military meaning. as society and warfare have steadily grown more complex, military factors have become more and more inseparable from the non-military in the conduct of war and in programs designed to secure peace . . . The strategist deals in many uncertainties and imponderables. Indeed the art of the strategist is the art of the 'calculated risk' . . ." It is prudent to acknowledge that so far, the Jayewardene government had strategically used the Japanese economic aid for its advantage. It has also been pursuing the Japanese population to be on 'their side'. The samething could be said in terms of the relationships between Jayewardene and Rajiv Gandhi from Aug. 1987. The present rift between the LTTE militants with the Indian administration is an excellent example of that proverb, 'Do not put all the eggs in one basket'.

Bertrand Russell, in his social analysis on 'Power', wrote fifty years ago: "The importance of economic factors in war steadily increases as war becomes more mechanised and scientific, but it is not safe to assume that the side with superior economic resources must necessarily be victorious. The importance of propaganda in generating national feeling has increased as much as that of economic factors".

The theoreticians and strategists of Eelam should note the changing winds in the international scene. In the 1980s, Tokyo has become an international power centre in 'economic terms'. The NEWSWEEK of Sept. 12th 1988 commented on this new phenomenon: "Japan is now reaching out to the nations around it. It is increasing its foreign-aid budget, boosting imports and beginning to assert itself diplomatically throughout the region. Tokyo's ultimate goal, Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita told his Chinese hosts recently, is for Japan to fulfill an international role matching its increased economic power". There was a time, thirty years ago, the then French President Charles de Gaulle ridiculed the Japanese Prime Minister as a 'transistor salesman', Now, wherever

Continued on page 19

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CHEKOV AND BRECHT IN TAMIL:

A Review of Two Plays

ONE problem facing the development of modern Tamil drama in Sri Lanka was the lack of a sufficiently large audience for serious and socially relevant drama. The difficulties in cultivating such an audience were huge in a situation where popular taste was conditioned by the Tamil cinema, notorious for its poor taste. Balendra and the Tamil Performing Arts Society were among the dedicated few whose efforts to build an audience both enthusiastic and discriminating in taste proved successful so that the Tamil speaking people could afford the luxury of one or two new Tamil theatre productions of quality every year. Serious Tamil drama too fell victim to the ethnic violence of 1983, with many talented artistes leaving Sri Lanka and those remaining facing difficulties on several fronts. It was heartening to know that members of the Tamil Performing Arts Society were able to regroup in London and continue their good work from where they left off in Sri Lanka. Most of the plays that they have staged so far in London had already been staged successfully by them in Sri Lanka. There have also been a few new productions like the shorter of the two plays staged on 1.10.88 at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, London.

Chekov and Brecht, the former a product of pre-revolutionary Russia and still cherished as the greatest Russian playwright and the latter the greatest German contribution to modern theatre. Both playwrights transcended their respective national boundaries through capturing the essence of human spirit and human relations and contributing to the cause of internationalism and equality of all human beings. The plays are of particular significance today, especially that of Brecht, with a very explicit message, in our social context where narrow nationalism is used to cloud and to suppress the more important questions of class and class struggle.

The adaption of Chekov's short play 'Proposal' was cleverly done despite the occasional flaw that accompanies adaptations. (For instance the middle-aged spinster and her suitor start to quarrel about their oxen and derogatory remarks are made about the teeth of an ox; the significance of teeth cannot be the same in the original where the animal in dispute is a horse and, consequently, the bitter argument loses some degree of seriousness.') The verbal exchange between the three characters was very lively and sounded quite real in the dialect of rural Jaffna, and the performance was flawless.

The adaptation of Brecht's 'The Exception and the Rule' – 'Yugatharmam' – was a more ambitious task and was very well received when staged originally in Sri Lanka. Some did raise questions relating to the faithfulness of the adapted version to the theatrical style of Brecht, but that debate appeared at best to be academic. The adaptation was faithful to the essence of the original and was presented in a highly effective manner, although one could always question and comment on the techniques used. Staging the play in London with somewhat limited resources, relating to the limited time available to the artistes and the facilities which a serious task like this would demand, resulted in minor slips which, however, faded in significance against a good overall performance.

The music and the powerful rythm contributed immensely to the success of the play. The costumes were colourful and highly effective, and the lighting and sets were efficiently handled. The stage performance was brilliant and I cannot fail to note the powerful stage presence of Krishnarajah who plays the role of the heartless merchant. I am of the view that the appearance of the cast would have been enhanced by the use of colourful facial make-up rather than white half-masks; but the masks, I should admit, solved some of the problems arising from the scale of the task and the size of the cast.

It is appropiate here to comment on one problem relating to the translation/adaptation of plays to Tamil. The standard language is now largely restricted to formal essays, letters and some aspects of creative writing. It is still used by some in platform oratory; but as a spoken language it can sound alien (if not sterile-or even dead). The problem of modernisation of Tamil has so far not been satisfactorily dealt with, so that one is forced to make the difficult and undesirable choice between the colloquial language (or a polished version of it) and the (or a?) standard form. The formal language is prefered in more traditional themes while the colloquial language is used to a considerable extent in contemporary and lighter themes. In Chekov's play there was no problem once the choice was made in favour of the colloquial, but the theme of Brecht's play appeared to demand the use of formal language. The songs were quite effective that way and, since they did not reflect everyday speech, the use of colloquial language in the verses could have done harm. Although the script, on the whole, tended to adhere to the formal language, there were occasional lapses into the colloquial and the problem could have been resolved satisfactorily by adhering to one or the other. The delivery was closer to everyday speech than to the oratorical style of olden days and that is a desirable thing, provided the style of language represents an idealised form of everyday speech. The script itself was in clear and simple language so that it posed no serious problem of communication and is commendable, given the decisions that have been made about language and style.

The Tamil Performing Arts Society deserves to be congratulated for their successful staging of the two plays and encouraged to contribute further to Tamil drama, for which the development of an interested and responsive audience is essential. Punctuality and good conduct appear to be qualities that the London Tamil audiences reserve for western events. Only a serious audience deserves serious theatre, and the development of a good tradition in any art form is a two-way process.

The Tamils in London are fortunate to have good and dedicated artistes like the TPAS in their midst and it will be a crying shame not to make full use of their talent.

S.Sivasegaram

Continued from page 17

the Japanese Prime Minister lands, there is a red carpet welcome. Many American scholars note that, if the 20th century is dubbed as the American century, the next one belongs to the Pacific rim Asian countries, predominantly Japan (and also China).

If Indian freedom struggle against the British took at least an 'intensive fifty year period' (Mahatma Gandhi began his struggle in 1893 at South Africa and assumed the leadership in India in 1918; and thereafter he challenged the British for another three decades), certainly the freedom struggle of Sri Lankan Tamils is not going to come to fruition in another five or ten years. Even if Eelam, by some ingenious master-stroke, becomes a reality in the near future, the rest of the world is not anxious to wait in line to pour foreign aid for the Tamils, just because they had suffered for the last three decades. There are many who are fighting for sympathy of wealthy donors; Palestinians, Irish, Black South Africans etc. So, rather than living in false pretense that Eelam, when achieved, will be flowing with 'milk and honey', we should cultivate the friendship of future global powers (China and Japan). It is not easy. But it has to be done. Better late than never.

THE END OF AN ERA

DR. MAHENTHIRAN SELVARAJ PERINPANAYAGAM

TAMIL TIMES announces with great sadness the death of Dr M.S. Perinpanayagam Consultant Psychiatrist and benefactor, on 12th October 1988. He was the very first subscriber to this journal and we mourn the loss of a true and loyal friend.

Mahen was the eldest son of the late J.T.R. and Parimalam Perinpanayagam. JTR was head of the St Thomas's Preparatory School, Colombo, the culmination of a long and successful teaching career. There perhaps was a starting point for many in the family who, irrespective of their chosen field of expertise, distinguished themselves as great teachers – Mahen was the foremost example. But that was just one facet of this remarkable man. An astute clinician, a caring and compassionate doctor, a philanthropist, a keen musician, the list is endless. Yet there was never anything half-hearted about what he did.

He graduated in Medicine from the University of Ceylon in 1953 and proceeded to England the following year to pursue post-graduate education. His initial training was at the Brook General and associated hospitals in Blackheath, covering many disciplines that included surgery, general medicine, pathology and paediatrics. He obtained his diploma in child health in 1956. He began his successful and highly acclaimed career in psychiatry in 1960 when he was appointed senior house officer at Bexley Hospital, Kent. He obtained his postgraduate diploma and became senior registrar at the Guys group of hospitals in 1964. He was tutored and influenced by Sir Stafford Clarke.

In 1967 he was appointed consultant psychiatrist to the Dartford and Gravesham health district, which post he held until his retirement from the Health Service in 1984. In addition to his clinical responsibilities in 1969 he was appointed clinical tutor, University of London, and was given the stewardship for postgraduate psychiatric education in the region. There followed a remarkable series of organisational achievements in the field of postgraduate education, hundreds of trainees passed through his hands – career psychiatrists, general practitioners, medical undergraduates, nursing and other paramedical professionals formed a constant stream that flowed through Dartford.

The sad loss of Mahen will be felt by all who have had the privilege of knowing him both professionally and as a friend. For many doctors arriving in England especially from the Third World, he acted as a beacon 'which must glow through time and change unquenchably the same'. Those who came, came with little idea of what faced them – their scant knowledge perhaps gained from standard literary texts. From word of mouth they had perhaps heard the name 'Dr Peri' in tones of re-assurance that here was a man who would helpd and this he did with an inordiante amount of care and concern which stretched and enveloped their families too.

He was closely associated with the Royal College of Psychiatrists right from its inception. Between 1974-1977 he led the college panel inspecting provisions for post graduate training in psychiatry in the East Anglian region. In 1975 he was made a fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. He was one of the founder organisers of the bi-annual revision course in psychiatry held in the University of Surrey, Guildford. For many years he was an examiner for the preliminary test and the finals for the membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

He was a consultant psychotherapist to the Home Office and an adviser in psychiatry in the Diocese of Rochester.

He retired in 1984 and took up appointment as consultant psychiatrist to the Board of Health, Guernsey, Channel Islands. Despite failing health he was defiant and courageously carried on his work with diligence and dedication.

When it came to helping, Mahen knew no race, no religion, no caste, no creed. He was saddened by the advent of communal politics in Sri Lanka and the tragic turn of events during the last decade distressed him deeply. He gave unflinching support to the efforts that were being made with respect to rehabilitation work in the Tamil homelands and to the attempts that were made to highlight the human rights violations that were perpetrated on innocent civilian Tamils. He was a member of the General Council of SCOT and was a source of considerable moral and financial support.

Mahen's approach to patients and colleagues was forthright and unequivocal. He infused confidence and his care and concern shines on as a light to us all. The memory of him on Christmas Eve touring each and every ward playing his accordion delighting his patients, the memory of him sharing the love of music that he nurtured with friends and family, remains with us all. His beaming smile lit all around and his charisma gave hope to those in distress. The joy he brought is indelibly ours.

Only a few months ago he returned to the mainland but sadly he is no longer with us. He is survived by his wife Pushpam, daughter Malli and brothers Gnani, Soundy and Selventhi.

K.Sivakumar

Tamil Culture Course

The Department of Tamil Studies in Foreign Countries of the Tamil university of Thanjavur, South India proposes to conduct a 30 day course as an 'Introduction to Tamil Culture' for foreign nationals from 1st to 30th December 1988. Those interested are expected to make their own travel arrangements to Thanjavur University and in addition are expected to send or pay on arrival two hundred U.S. dollars to cover registration, course fee and accomodation including food and local transport.

Further particulars may be obtained from Dr. S. Nagarajan, Professor of Foreign Studies, Tamil University, Thanjavur 613005, Tamil Nadu, S. India or in London from Mr. K. Gnanasoorian, Director, Institute for International Tamil Renaissance, Phone 01-531 6435, from whom application forms etc. may also be obtained not later than 5.11.88

VACANCY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

The South London Tamil Welfare Group requires an administrative officer who will be directly responsible to the management committee to deal with office administration and supervise case workers. The applicant must be fluent in Tamil and English and will be required to coordinate assistance to Tamil people in all areas of welfare work.

The salary will be £10,392 p.a. including outer London weighting. Applications should be made in writing to, The Chairman, SLTWG, 76 Queens Rd. Wimbledon, SW19 8NR, by Wednesday 2 Nov 1988, including a written curriculum vitae and giving two references.

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WEDDING BELLS

We congratulate the following couples on their recent marriage:

Gerard *(son of Mr.& Mrs. A.X. Fernando) and* **Marina Vivienne** *(daughter of the late Dr.C. Singarajah and Mrs.G. Singarajah on 16.10.88 at St.Margaret's Church, Carshalton Beeches, Surrey – 70 Beeches Avenue, Carshalton Beeches, Surrey, U.K.*

Jeya Kanthan *(son of Mr.& Mrs. Sivasithamparam, 8 Parcelsus Road, Tiwi, Darwin, N.T.0810) and* **Ramani** *(daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Selvajayam, 18 Colster Crescent, Wagaman, Darwin, N.T.0810) on 20.10.88 at Kalymnian Brotherhood Hall, Amy Johnson Avenue, Karama, Darwin, Australia.*

Vijayanathan *(son of the late Mr. & Mrs. P. Arumugan of Ilavalai, Sri Lanka) and* **Radhika** *(daughter of Mr. & Mrs.N. Sivaneson, 69 Foxglove Close, Witham, Essex, U.K.) on 23.10.88 at London Sri Murugan Temple, Manor Park, London E12 6AF.*

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

November 6, 1.00pm **Skanda Varodaya College Old Students' Association** (U.K. Branch) **Reunion Lunch** *at the Lola Jones Hall, Greaves Place, Off Garratt Lane, Tooting, London SW17. For tickets telephone 01-644 0972, 01-681 2052 and 01-788 8271*

November 12 7.30pm to 1a.m. **Annual Dance and Fashion Show** *presented by* **Sri Lanka Christian Association** *at Kensington Town Hall, London W8. For details contact Charmaine: Tel 01-969 0598*

The wedding took place in Madras of Yarzhini, daughter of Tamil Eelam political activist Mr M.K. Eelaventhan, and Dr.S. Rajendran, Asst. Professor in the Tamil department of Madras Christian College, of Gangaikondacholapuram, Thanjavur. Described as 'the first notable marriage link between Tamil Nadu and Tamil Eelam', the marriage was conducted according to non-Brahminic Tamil custom. DMK leaders Messrs. M. Karunanidhi and Anbazahan presided and conducted the ceremony. A large number of Tamil scholars in Tamil Nadu, along with a representative gathering of the Sri Lankan Tamil community in Madras, including TULF leaders were present.

OBITUARIES

Gunaratnam Shanmuganathan *(known as G.S. Nathan) Medical Scientist, formerly attached to Harley Street (Harvard Clinic), Royal Masonic Hospital; National Heart and Chest Hospital, London; and recently attached to Saudi Arabian Medical Research Institute, passed away suddenly while on holiday on 26th August 1988. Cremation took place at South London Crematorium on 3.9.88. He was the beloved husband of Sotheeswary; loving father of Radhika, Sangeetha and Laksmanan; brother of Jeyasingham (Jaffna College, Vaddukoddai), late Balasingham (Coventry, U.K.), late Tharmarajah (Lesotho), Rajamohan, Mrs Selvaratnam and Mrs Paramalingham (Canada); son in law of Subramaniam (Kantharmadam, Jaffna) and the late Mrs Subramaniam; brother in law of Parameswaran (Dartford, Kent, U.K.), Dr (Mrs) Sathialuxmy Selvadurai and Mr Selvadurai (Kantharmadam, Jaffna); and uncle of Kishani.*

Dr. Ponniah Rajaratnam, *Retired apothecary, husband of Ratnapoopathy, father of Sivathasan, Sivamalar, Senthilnathan, Sivaranjani Ramathas, and Puviraj (K.S.A.) expired on 11.7.88 at Rajagiri, Alaveddy, Sri Lanka. Informant: P. Nalliah, Canada.*

S.C.Karunananthan *formerly of St John's College, Jaffna; Training Colleges of Nallur & Batticaloa; Education Department, Jaffna; and Sokoto, Nigeria passed away at his brother's residence in Australia (53 Streeton Parade, Everton Park, Brisbane, QLD 4053) Husband of Kirupa, father of Suhanthi, Thayalan, Krishanthi, Mitran and Damayanthi – U.K.Tel. 0303-42051*

IN MEMORIUM

Mrs Florence Ariyamalar **Rajasingham**
Born: 24.07.1922.

Rajasingham Manoharan
Born 30.07.1949

Killed: 16.10.1987

We miss you both more than we could have ever thought.
As each day dawns the despair and the anger grows.
Until, the treacherous hand that killed you both
With his 'Peace Keeping Force', and
Left your bodies seven long days for dogs to feast,
Is unmasked to reveal his role in these murders most foul,
Our hearts will know no peace.
We pray that your souls have found the peace we so sadly lack

Fondly remembered on their first death anniversary by
C.Rajasingham, Vasuki Manoharan, Saratha and Priyan Manoharan, Dr Narendran, Manohari Thevathasan, Selvi Rajendran, Neela Navaratnaraj, Jayadevan and Gowri Surendrakumar.

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